

BRIDGE
CLOSED

Causeway collapse: Crisis becomes a memory page 8

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Straight Talk..... | 2 |
| Train wreck rescue..... | 3 |
| Van pooler tells all..... | 4 |
| Turnpike bond sale..... | 5 |
| West Nile Virus..... | 6 |
| Transportation Digest..... | 10 |
| Letters..... | 12 |
| Service Awards..... | 14 |



by Mike Behrens
Executive Director

About this time a year ago, I was just getting used to the reality of being appointed executive director for the Texas Department of Transportation.

My thanks to everyone who has taken note of this first anniversary. The experience has been exciting and humbling at the same time. These emotions are mixed with a measure of pride in all the good the people of TxDOT do every day.

Of the coming months, one promise has been made to me: the experience will continue to be exciting ... and humbling ... and filled with pride.

Just the other day, as the Texas Transportation Commission was getting ready to convene its August meeting, the governor made a visit to the Greer Building in Austin.

The governor was here for a news conference at which he announced the sale of \$2.2 billion in bonds for construction of key elements of the Central Texas Turnpike System.

It is exciting to know that we can use such new methods (for Texas) to expand highway capacity, to reduce traffic congestion and to improve mobility. The bonds provide the financing for State Highway 130, State Highway 45, and an extension of Loop 1 (also known around Austin as MoPac).

Here is how the governor put this achievement into perspective: "For commuters in Central Texas, today's announcement is a positive sign that

Bonds expedite road-building efforts

traffic relief is on its way. The innovative financing for the Central Texas Turnpike System means needed roads will be ready years ahead of what would have otherwise been possible."

If we had used traditional Texas methods to finance these projects, it could have taken 20 years. By selling bonds, completion is expected in five years. Through the mechanism of toll collections will come the money to pay off the bonds. Also, tolls will provide the money needed to maintain the highways.

The use of tolls as a way to build and maintain highways is growing across the nation. Several states are using bonds to advance toll-road projects. This funding method is similar to the financing that may be used for the Trans Texas Corridor.

What's humbling are the big dollars needed to build today's highways. Total cost of the Central Texas Turnpike System is pegged at \$2.9 bil-

lion. That's for right of way, utility adjustments, design and construction. Funds from federal and local entities will be added to the bond funds to pay for the project. While cost is always a factor, the value of benefits from this project far outweighs the expense.

It is also humbling to know that this project, as helpful as it soon will be, will not solve every problem associated with highway travel in Central Texas. The adequacy of transportation systems that will serve increasingly more Texans in the future will challenge us all for many, many years to come.

It is that continuing challenge, along with our "let's get to work" attitude, that builds the pride everyone in TxDOT should feel as we continue to build and maintain the transportation infrastructure for the state of Texas.

We are advancing our mission of providing safe, effective and efficient systems to transport people and goods in and through Texas. ☼

Letter from the editor

Time is relative. And TxDOT retiree Larry Dixon of San Antonio has some thoughts relative to time.

"I retired April 30..." he e-mails. "I did see my name in... [Transportation News.] It showed that I retired with 7 years service. That was correct...with TxDOT."

But, as Larry goes on to say, he also has 16 years with the Railroad Commission and some additional state time as well.

"So, my total state time I retired with was 26 years, 10 months," he continues. "I feel like that should have been reflected in the News."

I completely understand Larry's point of view.

Though I have only six months with TxDOT, my total state time exceeds 16 years. Like Larry, I don't want anyone thinking I'm wet behind the ears.

So, for the record, Larry Dixon retired with 26 years, 10 months of service to the people of Texas.

Also for the record, we print the service time we receive from our Human Resources Department. If anyone planning on retiring wants to contact HRD

■ See From the editor, Page 3

On the cover—

TxDOT oversees repairs to the Queen Isabella Causeway following a barge collision in 2001.

Photo by Valerie Bates, Rio Bravo Gallery, Port Isabel, TX.

Story on page 8.



Transportation News is published by the
TxDOT Public Information Office
125 E. 11th, Austin, TX 78701-2483
Phone: (512) 463-8588
Circulation: 18,725

Texas Department of Transportation

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mike Behrens

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Steve Simmons

PUBLISHER
Randall Dillard

EDITOR
Mike Cox

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Buddy Allison



Recycled
paper

In compliance with the State Depository Law, copies of this publication are available at the Texas State Library.
©2002 by Texas Department of Transportation; all rights reserved.

TxDOT duo rescues train wreck victim

by Barbara Seal
Childress District

May 31 was like most work days for Mike Ritchie and Gary English, Childress District maintenance technicians in Donley County.

As they worked that morning, installing a sign on U.S. 287 about two miles west of Clarendon, they could hear trains in the distance. Turning to look, English shouted, "They are going to hit!"

Ritchie looked up just in time to see two trains collide head-on.

"It was a huge fireball," English says.

"It looked like it shot up 200 feet in the air," Ritchie adds.

According to Ritchie, the trains screeched and squealed for what seemed like five minutes as the force of the impact crushed the lead locomotives and derailed 22 coal cars and three freight cars.

The two TxDOT workers immediately dropped what they were doing and rushed to the scene.

"Someone asked for shovels," he says. "We gave them what we had and called our supervisor to report the accident."

After receiving the call from Ritchie, Donley County maintenance supervisor Steve Smith sent James Thomas and Roy Bertrand to the scene to haul equip-



Photo courtesy of the Clarendon Enterprise

Childress District maintenance technicians were on the scene of this fiery head-on train wreck in Donley county.

ment and help set up traffic control.

When they arrived, the 116-car coal train weighing nearly 16,000 tons and a 77-car train (5.5 tons) were on fire. One of the crewmembers was trapped under a coal car.

Thomas and Bertrand immediately grabbed shovels and began helping other local emergency personnel dig him out.

"There was diesel and coal everywhere," says Bertrand. "He was buried between the engine and a coal car."

Rescuers had to dig the earth from under the pinned man to free his leg.

"We used sharp shooters (shovels) to dig him out. He was pinned on his stomach for about 30 minutes before we could finally dig deep enough to get under his leg and dig the coal from around him," Bertrand says. "He is lucky to have suffered only a broken leg."

They kept shoveling even as flames threatened to catch the coal around the man on fire.

"The local fire department sprayed foam on the flames and a local tow truck secured the engine to keep it from falling on the rescuers," says Thomas.

"At first it wasn't too hot, but by the time we finally got him out, the flames had gotten into the engine and it had started to get very warm," he adds.

Emergency medical workers monitored the trapped man's vital signs.

Four railroad workers (two on each train) jumped when they realized the two trains were going to crash. The engineer on the coal train was killed. The other three are recovering from their injuries.

Thomas also is a Donley County volunteer firefighter. "I was never afraid for my safety," he says, "I didn't even think about it. I was just focused on getting him out alive."

Department of Public Safety Trooper Wayne Beighle says, "There is no doubt that all the departments...in this rescue effort saved this man's life." ★

From the editor

Continued from Page 2

and get them to pass along their total state time, we'll be happy to publish that in our retirement notices.

Enjoy your retirement, Larry. You've put in your time...

Like an annoyed eight-pointer, some folks are still figuratively snorting and stomping their feet over PIO Bill Powell's July story on his close call with a deer in the roadway.

Since the story recommended installation of inexpensive deer whistles as a way to avoid dangerous vehicle-deer crashes, an e-mailer wonders if the editor has stock in any deer whistle manufacturing concerns.

Not only do I not have any deer whistle stock, the way the stock mar-

ket's going these days, I don't know that any stock would do my family's investment portfolio any good—even if we had one.

TxDOT's Georges Barrera cites an article by the Georgia Fish and Game Commission that said some deer whistles don't make any sound, much less an ultrasonic one, and that "not a single [deer whistle] tested brought any response at all from any deer."

Well, since we're not Consumer Reports, we'll let the deer whistle issue play out elsewhere. But we'll give Barrera the last word, since it is sound advice:

"The deal is, drive with caution! Speed kills...watch all highway signs. If you can avoid hitting anything do so, but with good driving skills and smarts."

— Mike Cox



by Ann Zeeck
Public Information Office

Ziming Yang is a quiet man with small, alert eyes. Most mornings when I arrive at my vanpool stop, he is walking the parking lot in small circles — part of his daily exercise ritual. Coming to the University of Texas

at Austin in 1989 as a visiting scholar from Shanghai, he's now a U.S. citizen and energy conservation specialist for the City of Austin. When Ziming laughs in his soft, high chuckle, his eyes disappear into crinkles and a big smile spreads across his face. He is a delightful person, but I wouldn't know him at all if it weren't for Vanpool 99.

I joined the vanpool on my first day at TxDOT in July 2001. I'm here to tell you — this program is a deal! Getting to know great people like Ziming is just one of the perks. Vanpooling eliminates driver stress, saves gas and insurance money, reduces vehicle wear and tear, is friendlier to the environment and provides dependable, on-time transportation to and from work. It's a win-win-win proposition for the 16 TxDOT employees who take advantage of the Capital Metro Service.

For starters, look at the math. As a resident of Cedar Park, a suburb in northwest Austin, my roundtrip commute is over 40 miles. Given the mileage I already generate chauffeuring three kids to weekly activities, I'd easily rack up 1,200 miles a month plus \$120-\$160 in gas expenses.

Now I fill up once or twice a month for about \$50 and pay \$25 for vanpool privileges, which includes a monthly bus pass. That's the math: \$75 and fewer vehicle miles versus \$120-160

Come on in, the commute's great



Capital Metro's Vanpool 99 riders save money, reduce vehicle wear and tear, and solve world problems during their daily commute to work in downtown Austin.

TxDOT photo

and more miles.

Money isn't everything, as they say. Another benefit is that I'm never late. Vanpool 99 is so dependably prompt and practiced that even on the worst traffic days, we know exactly which alternate routes work best.

Capital Metro offers an optional \$5 annual insurance program that provides up to four free taxi rides per year in the event of an emergency, like an unexpected project that keeps me late at work or a crisis with one of my kids. The environmentalist in me also likes the idea that I've taken a polluting car off the road and another commuter out of congestion.

Because I've ridden the vanpool since the day I began work, I don't miss my car. I assure you, freedom of movement is still possible.

If I need to run an errand, I can hop a Dillo or ride any bus for free anytime. I don't have to play the parking game at the Greer Building, either. I often watch in amusement as my co-workers stalk parking places like cats on the prowl, ready to pounce on a just-vacated space. Who needs parking hassles when you can have curbside service?

Our driver, Dawn Doyle, is one of two remaining original riders. As she tells it, Vanpool 99 was formed over a decade ago by 15 TxDOT employees from the

Commuter programs in Texas

Austin Area

Capital Metro
Vanpools: 512-477-RIDE
www.capmetro.austin.tx.us

Corpus Christi Area

Corpus Christi Regional
Transportation Authority
Ridealong Service: 361-884-8400
www.ccrta.org

Dallas Area

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)
Vanpools: 214-747-7433
www.dart.org

El Paso Area

Sun Metro
General Information: 915-533-1220
www.ci.el-paso.tx.us/city_resources/

Fort Worth Area

Fort Worth Transit Authority
Employer services: 817-336-RIDE
www.the-t.com

Houston Area

Metropolitan Transit
METROVan: 713-224-RIDE
(Toll-free: 1-888-606-RIDE)
www.ridemetro.org

San Antonio Area

Via Metropolitan Transit
Pass Program: 210-362-2020
www.viainfo.net

For communities not listed above, contact the public transportation coordinator in your district office.

■ See VANPOOL, Page 5

Turnpike bond sale brings in \$2.2 billion

by Gabriela Garcia
Public Information Office

TxDOT has finalized the financial plan for a long-awaited turnpike project in Central Texas.

For the first time ever, the agency entered the bond market this summer and by the end of August had earned \$2.2 billion for three new toll roads in Central Texas.

The concept of government entities selling bonds is no recent innovation, but for TxDOT it is a new way to finance highway construction.

"It is an amazing and exciting chapter in the transportation history of Texas and it's a new way of building roads," said Texas Transportation Commission member Robert Nichols during an Aug. 29 news conference announcing the bond sale.

As one of the largest toll road construction projects in the nation, the bond proceeds will help finance three elements of the Central Texas Turnpike Project — five miles of Loop 1, 13 miles of State Highway 45, and 49 miles of State Highway 130.

The 65-mile turnpike project will be complete by December 2007.

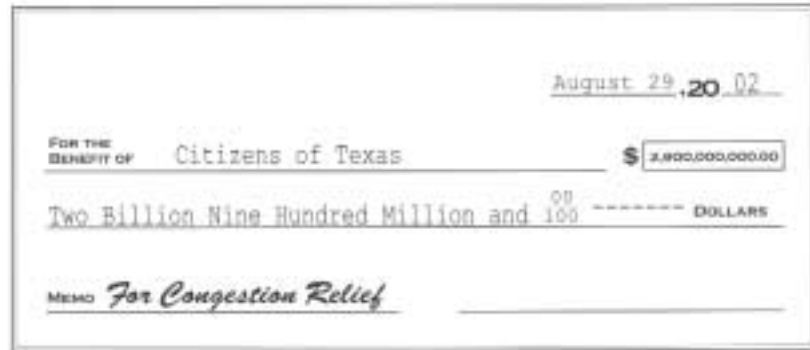
"Congestion continues to grow and motorists are demanding more transportation options," says Phil Russell, Texas Turnpike Division Director.

"TxDOT is delivering one of the

most anticipated projects in Central Texas history and one that is vital to the mobility and safety of residents and visitors," Russell says.

All three elements of the turnpike project will compliment existing roads and provide congestion relief for I-35.

For businesses making deliveries and for commuters going to work, highway officials say these toll roads are good news because they give motorists more transportation options.



TxDOT has estimated that up to 15 percent of cars and trucks could be diverted from I-35 in the Austin-San Antonio corridor. Once SH 45 South (a direct connector between I-35 and SH 130) is built, even more vehicles could be moved off I-35.

In addition, local officials say Williamson and Travis counties soon will be applying for a regional mobility authority to build U.S. 183A as a toll road.

"The state needs relief from traffic

congestion as soon as possible and toll roads are the fastest way to accomplish it," says Russell. "Whether it's the transportation commission or a regional mobility authority, issuing bonds to build roads allows them to be completed sooner and open to traffic years ahead of schedule."

If financed through traditional methods, Russell says, the three toll roads would have taken at least 20 years to build. By selling bonds, the roads will be completed in five years.

Total cost of the project, including right of way acquisition, utility adjustments, design and construction, is estimated at \$2.9 billion. Federal, state and local dollars make up the difference between the total cost and the bonds secured.

Almost \$500 million in funds and right of way were contributed by local entities including Travis County, Williamson County, the city of Austin, and the city of Round Rock. ☼

Vanpool saves money, reduces stress, lowers pollution

Continued from Page 4

Northwest Austin area. Due to job moves and other reasons, the vanpool has evolved into a Heinz variety of downtown employees. Riders come and go in a steady flux. We're currently holding at eight, and I really like the diversity of our group. My friends represent several cultures, professions and religious traditions, so our discussions are frequently lively and engaging.

We've also assigned ourselves the useful task of policing Austin drivers. Our CapMetro van can be an irritant to some drivers, who often react by taking ridiculous safety risks to get around

and ahead of us. The unfortunate motorist who drives recklessly within our view will be treated to our best "group glare," in which all eight of us stare sternly at the offender as we drive by. The message is clear: We saw what you did and you better not do it again. Don't know if it helps, but we try.

I especially like to hear the stories of past vanpool escapades. Some former riders were clearly beloved while others' departures were cheerfully celebrated.

Once, one of the more coordination-challenged riders slipped on her driveway after she got off the van and rolled down the street a few feet. Sadly, no one

on the vanpool even noticed, and off they drove! They weren't aware it had happened until she told them the next day.

Dawn talks of writing a book about the riders on Vanpool 99. She's going to call it "Diaries of a Mad Vanpool" and swears it will be a bestseller.

So check into vanpooling if you think it might work for you. Save money, have some fun, help the environment. The first step is easy — submit your name, neighborhood and work schedule/location to the CapMetro matching service and see what happens. What are you waiting for? See you in the pool! ☼

West Nile Virus prompts caution, district action



by **Bill Powell**
Public Information Office

A mosquito-borne virus named after an African river has crossed the Sabine into Texas.

Most TxDOT districts are watching for signs of the West Nile Virus and doing what they can to destroy mosquito habitat. Some districts are looking at ways to reduce mosquito habitat along roadways.

The Dallas District is draining standing water from median strips for the same reason. The districts closest to the Gulf of Mexico and those abundant with water are more at risk for spread of the disease than those inland and with less standing water.

The death of a Houston woman has triggered concerns that many more cases will follow. The most vulnerable are people over 55, very young children, and people whose systems are affected by conditions (such as cancer)

that have already weakened the victim's immunity. However, less than one percent of the mosquito population, even in areas with outbreaks of the virus, will carry the disease. The insects transmit the virus through their salivary glands while taking blood from their victims.

Mosquitoes get the virus by feeding from the blood of infected birds.

They spread it to horses, dogs and cats, as well as humans. For whatever the reasons, dogs and cats never seem to suffer from the disease.

The virus mainly causes encephalitis, or a swelling of the brain. Symptoms such as severe headache, confusion, weakness, paralysis and seizure characterize the disease. Few will get a severe case. Most who contract it will have only mild flu-like symptoms and will recover fully.

Authorities disagree on the level of threat posed by the virus. Here are the facts:

- The Center for Disease Control in Atlanta has reported 737 cases (and 40 deaths) of human West Nile Virus since it was first detected in 1999.
- The virus has been found in animals and humans in 41 states.
- People have been diagnosed with

the disease in 27 states and the District of Columbia.

- In Texas, 43 cases have been reported with one death confirmed.
- Mosquito control is up to mosquito-control districts and local health departments.
- Louisiana is the state hardest hit by the virus with 208 cases and 8 deaths.

Protecting against outbreaks of the virus can be accomplished by removing standing water from old tires, from plant containers, and from any other locations where mosquitoes can lay eggs and produce offspring. You can protect yourself by wearing mosquito repellent with DEET on exposed skin and by staying indoors at dawn or dusk when mosquitoes are swarming and biting. Do the same for others, but especially for those who are most at risk.

Remember that birds also carry the disease. Contact your local health department if you find a bird dead or dying on the ground. Do not handle it under any circumstances.

Authorities say not to panic. Only one percent of people infected with the virus develop severe symptoms. Drug companies are working on a cure for the virus but have not found one yet. If you suspect you have the virus, contact your local health care professional for advice and treatment. ★

SECC 2002

Make a difference through payroll deduction

- Convenient, effective way to give
- Local, national or international causes
- Many vital health and human services
- Charities meet strict eligibility requirements

The 2002 State Employee Charitable Campaign runs Sept. 1 - Oct. 31. Learn how you can help.

TxDOT names in the news



The Community Transportation Association of America recently designated **Bobby Killebrew** as a national certified transit program administrator. Killebrew has worked for TxDOT for more than 16 years. At present, he is deputy director for TxDOT's Public Transportation Division.

Chad Carter, P.E. has been named materials engineer for TxDOT's Abilene District. Carter will be in charge of the district lab and will oversee material testing, pavement management, and pavement design.

Michael Hyzak, P.E., Cynthia Landez, P.E., and Lora Teed, P.E., all in TxDOT's Bridge Division, recently passed their professional engineers test and received the designation of P.E.

Paula Sales-Evans, P.E. has been appointed director of transportation planning and development in the Corpus Christi District.

Michael Sharp has been selected as Jefferson maintenance supervisor for the Atlanta District. **Jimmy Neal Munn** has been selected as Gilmer maintenance supervisor for the Atlanta District.

Roberto M. Tejada, P.E. director of maintenance in the El Paso District, received a certificate of appreciation from the Department of Defense's National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. The award is presented to employers who strongly support their employees who serve in the National Guard or

Reserves. "TxDOT employees that add to their regular work duties by serving in reserve units of the armed forces deserve special recognition," Tejada said.

Linda R. Fabre has been selected as the Infrastructure Support Branch Manager with TxDOT's Information Systems Division. She began her TxDOT career in 1984 as a computer operator in the Division of Automation.

Steven D. Smith has been selected as the division administrative manager for TxDOT Bridge Division. He will oversee the division's human resources, automation, legislative coordination, budget, contracts, and other administrative areas.

Lemon Law gives consumers millions in relief

by **Bill Powell**
Public Information Office

Consumers who purchased or leased defective new vehicles received more than \$7.4 million in relief through the Texas Lemon Law in 2001.

The 2001 Lemon Law report, newly released by the Texas Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Division, lists number of complaints filed, defects reported and complaint disposition.

Of all complaints closed last year, more than two-thirds of consumers received measurable relief.

Approximately 33 percent had vehicles repurchased, replaced or traded by the manufacturer and an additional 36 percent received repairs, extended service contracts or other remedies.

"The numbers indicate the Lemon Law continues to do what it is intended to do — help consumers, with defective vehicles to get relief," said Brett Bray, director of TxDOT's Motor Vehicle Division.

To determine whether a particular model has received more or less than

its "expected share" of complaints, the report calculates an index based on number of complaints filed and the model's market share.

According to the report, five of the most popular selling vehicles have the highest complaint index rating. The vehicles in this group are Jeep Grand Cherokee, Ford Focus, Dodge Ram 1500 pickup, Ford Mustang and Chevrolet Suburban.

The report also lists 17 of the most popular selling vehicles with the lowest complaint index rating. From this group, the top five vehicles with the fewest numbers of complaints are Honda Accord, Toyota Camry, Honda Civic, Toyota Corolla and Chevrolet Tahoe.

Of defects cited by consumers, the report shows the engine (performance or emissions) category was the most common. This was followed by other defects including engine mechanical, electrical, suspension and steering, body and trim and brakes.

Under the Lemon Law, TxDOT's Motor Vehicle Board can order a vehicle replaced, repurchased or repaired

by the manufacturer. Some manufacturers choose to settle complaints rather than contesting them at a formal hearing.

The law also covers new or leased vehicles, including cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, motor homes and towable recreational vehicles.

The Motor Vehicle Board amended its Lemon Law rules recently to redefine the expected useful life of motorized vehicles to 120,000 miles.

The board also simplified proof requirements for motorized vehicles having a useful life other than 120,000 miles and eliminated the minimum 10 percent reasonable allowance for use for non-motorized vehicles. ☼

To obtain a copy of the 2001 Lemon Law Report or a consumer handbook on the Texas Lemon Law contact TxDOT's Motor Vehicle Division at (512) 416-4800 or 1-800-622-8682. The information is also available on the Web at www.state.tx.us/insdtdot/orgchart/mvd/lemon/lemonlaw.htm.

Reconnecting South Pa



Forty-five days after work started and 30 days ahead of schedule, the Queen Isabella Causeway was reopened. Rebuilding the bridge overcame the challenges that TxDOT and its contractors met with resolve and commitment.

by Mike Cox
Editor

Unlike most people who live on South Padre Island, Steve Hathcock — newspaper columnist, book-seller and treasure hunter — was still awake early that Saturday morning.

“I had been channel surfing for the latest on the World Trade Center attacks at around 2:30 in the morning when the news broke,” he says. “A barge had struck the Queen Isabella Causeway, partially collapsing the 27-year-old bridge.”

Hathcock was one of some 15,000 people — only 2,500 of them year-round residents, the rest tourists — suddenly trapped on the sandy island off the lower Texas coast.

Four barges laden with rolled steel had hit the 2.5-mile-

long bridge shortly after 1:30 a.m. Sept. 15, 2001, only four days after the terrorist attacks that stunned the nation.

Though the barges were slow-moving compared with the vehicles traveling across the bridge 80 feet above, the sheer mass of the vessels caused two 80-foot sections of the bridge to collapse. Several vehicles plunged into the waters of the Laguna Madre, claiming eight lives.

Four fishermen witnessed the incident and succeeded in rescuing four persons from the water.

Police closed both sides of the causeway to prevent further tragedy.

Coming so soon after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, for a short time local officials were concerned the damage to the bridge was intentional. Though they quickly determined that the collapse was an accident and not a hostile act, the consequences were no less devastating.

dre Island to the world

After hearing the news, Hathcock called SPI Mayor Ed Cyganicwiz to make sure he knew what had happened. By 7 a.m. Hathcock and most other island residents were out scrambling to buy water and food.

As lines grew at island stores and service stations, on the mainland Pharr District Engineer Amadeo Saenz and representatives of Williams Brothers Construction were assessing the situation at the causeway and pondering options.

In Austin, engineers with the Bridge Division located and began reviewing the causeway's original construction drawings and material listings. A TxDOT bridge design team was circling the bridge in an airplane by 9:30 a.m. By noon a TxDOT dive team was in the water to inspect the bridge footings.

At first, Saenz and others on the scene had hoped a temporary structure could get the bridge back in operation. But as the engineers looked closer at the damage, they began to realize other portions of the causeway were not stable.

Fourteen hours after the accident, they found out just how right they were when a third section of the bridge collapsed, crashing loudly into the water. With 240 feet of the causeway gone, the only option was to rebuild the missing portion.

That wasn't the only problem the agency faced. Repairing the bridge would take time. Somehow, TxDOT had to reconnect the island to the mainland. The solution was a mixture of privately owned vessels and TxDOT ferries from Port Aransas, which began shuttling people and vehicles back and forth across the Laguna Madre.

The TxDOT ferries were in operation within four days. North Carolina's DOT later provided another ferry and a private contractor from Mobile, Ala., dispatched a fourth ferry.

The makeshift transportation system was carrying 7,000 vehicles and 25,000 passengers a week at its peak.

Reconstruction of the causeway began on October 7. Two contractors did the work, one handling the demolition, the other doing the rebuilding. Workers kept the job going around the clock.

Torbio Garza, Pharr District maintenance director, says a key component in the operation was the use of high

range water reducer. This allowed much faster setup of concrete. Forty-five days after work started, the causeway reopened on Nov. 21 — 30 days ahead of schedule.

"From my perspective," says SPI Chamber of Commerce President Roxanne Harris, "all of the island businesses and residents remain eternally grateful for the rapid reopening of the causeway, not only for the immediate effect but also for the long-term impact."

Business on the island perked up with the reopening of the bridge, she says.

"The temporary loss of the causeway also served to prove the importance of efforts to build second road access to the island," she says. "We cannot become complacent in our efforts to build a second causeway, and if we do, all we need to do is remember Sept. 15, 2001."



Photo by Valerie D. Bates

The around-the-clock effort was instrumental in reconnecting South Padre Island to the mainland.

TxDOT also learned some things in the aftermath of the incident.

Garza says the experience taught him three important things that will come in handy if he ever has to deal with another problem like the causeway collapse:

People power: "Just turn your people loose and let them do the job."

Improvise: "You have to make things happen. In design, you have plans to follow. In maintenance, you just have ideas."

Communicate: "It's critical. Don't become territorial. Gather information and learn from it." ☆



Photo by Valerie D. Bates

idge presented



BIG MONTH FOR TxDOT

As a marker of construction activity, TxDOT noted in August the largest letting of contracts in TxDOT history. New heights were seen in project estimations (\$620 million) and in low bids returned (\$571 million). The only previous month that came close was the letting of August 1999. The project estimates then had a low bid return of \$544 million against a bid estimate of \$556 million.

LUBBOCK DISTRICT ENGINEER RETIRES

Carl Richard Utley, Lubbock district engineer, retired Aug. 31 after 36 years of public service with TxDOT. He was appointed district engineer in October 1993. **Gerald R. Sturdivant** began serving on Sept. 1 as the interim Lubbock district engineer until the position can be filled. Sturdivant had been deputy district engineer. The district engineer for Lubbock directs TxDOT operations in 17 counties: Bailey, Castro, Cochran, Crosby, Dawson, Floyd, Gaines, Garza, Hale, Hockley, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Parmer, Swisher, Terry and Yoakum.

MESSAGE SIGNS GO AMBER

TxDOT will play a role in the state's Amber Alert plan by putting time-sensitive information on dynamic message signs within a 200-mile radius of the point of a child abduction. **Rick Collins**, engineer of traffic at the Traffic Operations Division, recently visited six cities to participate in training for law enforcement and media. — *Bruce Hallock, Traffic Operations Division*

★ **Fuel economy:** According to the Federal Highway Administration, the cost of operating an intermediate car in 2001 was 4.5 cents a mile less than that of an intermediate sports utility vehicle. Averaging 15,000 miles a year, driving an intermediate car instead of an intermediate SUV would save \$675. (*Office of Transportation Technology*)

★ **Age and driving:** Older drivers will be giving up their car keys in larger numbers over the next 30 years, according to a study in the August issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*. About 7 million baby boomers age 85 and older will have stopped driving. They will be forced to rely on other forms of transportation.

The study's findings indicate that women, after turning in the car keys, will spend about a decade finding other ways to get to the grocery store or go on other errands. The study says men will have about six years of scrounging for other forms of transportation. The study suggests that more than 600,000 Americans stop driving each year, a number that will rise sharply in the coming decades as baby boomers retire in greater numbers. (*USA Today*)

★ **Exhausting:** Exhaust fumes from cars and trucks — especially the particles spewing from millions of tailpipes — pose a serious risk to people with heart disease, says a new study appearing in the medical journal *Circulation*. The preliminary study is the first to link highway pollution with exercise-induced oxygen starvation, which can bring on a heart attack in people with heart disease. About 12.4 million people in the United States have coronary heart disease, the

nation's leading killer. The American Heart Association says the disease claims about 500,000 annually. Experts predict a greater impact from the connection of air pollution and heart disease as traffic worsens and as more baby boomers get heart disease. (*USA Today*)

★ **Highway deaths:** The number of people killed in motor vehicle crashes rose to 42,116 last year. That's an increase of 171 from the year earlier. The U.S. Transportation Department cited growth in traffic and a decline in the death rate per 100 million miles traveled as reasons. The number killed in crashes involving alcohol rose, as did the number of motorcycle riders killed in crashes. (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*)

★ **Air quality:** California enacted legislation in late July that for the first time will cut the amount of greenhouse gases coming from tailpipes of all passenger vehicles sold in the state — even sport utility vehicles. It's a move that could change the kinds of cars Americans drive in the coming years.

The law is the first in the United States to affect consumers directly and to enlist drivers in reducing the potential for global warming. The new California standards for greenhouse gas emissions will affect drivers nationwide because California represents 10 percent of the national car market. With its 35 million residents, California has more people than Canada. California is the only state that is allowed (under a 1967 law) to set its own, tougher regulations for emissions. This loophole exists because of the previously extreme

■ See TRANSPORTATION, Page 11

Survey of Organizational Excellence results

by Sara Barker

Human Resources Division

Results of the Survey of Organizational Excellence, conducted last fall by the University of Texas, have been distributed to each of TxDOT's districts, divisions and offices.

All department employees had a chance to participate in this survey. Of the 14,800 surveys distributed in TxDOT, 48 percent were completed. Thirteen percent of those responding to the survey did so by computer.

Reports derived from the survey compare TxDOT scores with those of other participating agencies, including those with more than 10,000 employees — Texas Department of Human Services, Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, and Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Survey results also were compared with state agencies large and small that come under the heading of business and economic development. These are the Texas Workforce Network, Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Texas Lottery Commission, Texas Department of Economic Development, and the State Office of Risk Management.

On a scale of 100 to 500 (with 500 being the highest), TxDOT's overall score was 347. The statewide average for all the 105 participating agencies was 355. Both scores generally reflect positive feelings by employees about the agencies where they work.

TxDOT's strengths were quality, strategic orientation, adequacy of the physical environment, benefits, and job satisfaction.

High scores on quality indicate that customer service and continuous improvement are part of the organization's culture, and that employees feel they have the resources to deliver quality services. TxDOT has consistently scored high in this area.

Strategic orientation reflects perceptions about the way the agency responds to external influences and works with external entities.

Adequacy of the physical environment indicates that employees feel their work environment is safe and comfortable, and includes considerations such as space and parking.

TxDOT employees also rated the agency high in the area of benefits and overall job satisfaction.

The weakest category was fair pay with a score of 235, down from 286 in the prior survey. Scores in this area

were low statewide (averaging 266 among the 105 participating agencies) and were lowest in metropolitan areas.

The other four lowest-scoring categories (internal communication, team effectiveness, supervisor effectiveness, and change orientation) were all above 300 and all showed improvement from the prior survey.

Most significant improvement was evident in how employees felt about the statement "My performance is evaluated fairly." The score was 389, up from 268 two years ago.

The scores were significantly improved in the categories of fairness, empowerment, burnout (there's less of it), availability of information, and supervisor effectiveness. Supervisor effectiveness improved from 291 two years ago to 331 this cycle.

An interesting demographic is that TxDOT has a higher than average number of employees (87 percent) who expect to be working in the department in two years.

A new section in the survey, "Our Next Steps," includes suggestions on how to use the information. Suggestions include examining the findings and working with employees to select priority areas for improvement. ★

Transportation Digest

Continued from Page 10

levels of smog around Los Angeles. Once California tightens its standards, other states are allowed to adopt the state's stricter rules. Legal challenges to the new law are expected. (*Austin American-Statesman*)

★ Interstates: Although interstate highways made up only 1.2 percent of all roadway miles in 2000, they carried 24.1 percent of the total highway

travel. Nearly 70 percent of all roadway miles were local roads, which carried only 13.2 percent of highway travel. (*Office of Transportation Technology*)

★ Radars resume road scans: Radar-equipped vans that scan for defects below the surface of roads are again roaming Texas. The Federal Communications Commission in July gave the OK to TxDOT and the Texas Transportation Institute to use

the vans' ground-penetrating radar. Earlier this year, federal officials sought to limit the use of the special radar to avoid possible interference with global positioning satellites and other government communications equipment. TxDOT had pulled two of its radar-equipped vans and three special antennas out of service because of the earlier ruling by the communications commission. (*Dallas Morning News*) ★



To: TxDOT, El Paso District
From: Richard Robinson, El Paso, Texas

I was running an errand for my employer when the tire of the pickup I was driving blew out. I quickly moved over to the parking lane, switched the flashers on, and called my company to let them know about the blowout. They, in turn, said they would send someone to help me with the vehicle. As I ended my call, I noticed the Courtesy Patrol pulling up behind me with their lights flashing. The very first comment from the patroller was, "Are you all right, sir?" I was very impressed by his very kind and considerate concern. He then said, "Take it easy, sir. We'll take care of everything for you," and they did just that. Whoever is responsible for hiring these gentlemen should be very proud of the excellent service they provide to our community.

(Editor's note: Roman Gonzales and Joe Mendez assisted the letter's author. They are with the Courtesy Patrol in the El Paso District.)

To: TxDOT, Amarillo District
From: Mr. & Mrs. Troy Tubbs, Creede, CO

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Jeff Ewing for the help he gave us with our trailer tires. We lost a tire three miles west of Dalhart. Mr. Ewing stopped while my husband was gone to get the necessary supplies in Dalhart to see if we needed help. He told me that if we were still there when he returned he would stop. We were, and he stopped and helped us replace the hub and tire and checked all the lug nuts. Without his help we would have been there much longer. Again, thanks to a fine young man.

(Editor's note: Jeff Ewing is an engineering technician in the Dalhart Area engineering office, Amarillo District.)

To: Don McQuitty, Longview Maintenance
Section Supervisor, Tyler District
From: Charles R. Smith, Chief of Police, White
Oak Police Department

On April 23 officers of the White Oak Police Department responded to a four-vehicle accident on Highway 80 and Nottingham. As you are well aware, the construction in this area has caused many problems due to the lack of attention of vehicle operators. According to the reporting officer, the traffic situation was greatly intensified due to the accident. The officer said several of the state employees working at this construction site took the initiative and assisted the officers with traffic direction.

This gesture is greatly appreciated by the White Oak Police Department. I do not know the names of the employees, however I am sure you would be able to find out who they are and give them our sincerest "Thank You."

(Editor's note: TxDOT employees who stopped to help with traffic control were Thurber DeFreece, Michael Stone, and Chris Phillips. They are all transportation maintenance technicians for the Longview Maintenance Section.)

To: James Freeman, Beverly Yates, Eva Flenniken
From: Leigh Jeans, Paris District

Thank you for the opportunity to bring my oldest child to work on "Take Your Child to Work Day." She was very enthusiastic about being here to see what went on in the day-to-day operations in TxDOT. She told me she looks forward to coming back each year. She said she thought rather than being a schoolteacher she might want to work for TxDOT. (I know she is only 9 years old, but she recognized that TxDOT is a good place to work.)

She also learned that we all work very hard every day and said, "Now I know why you come home with headaches sometimes, Momma!" The special day also showed her that working hard makes you feel good about yourself in that you have a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day. This was a wonderful learning opportunity for her.

(Editor's note: James Freeman is the Paris district engineer. Beverly Yates is director of administration and Eva Flenniken is the human resources officer in the district. The letter writer works in human resources.)

Retirees

EXIT RAMP

June 2002
Transportation Planning and
Programming Division
John R. Morris
Engineering Technician
30 Years

July 2002
Amarillo District
Janet A. Johnson
Administrative Technician
9 Years

Atlanta District
Aaron A. Harding
District Equipment Manager
18 Years

Lubbock District
Richard Jeter
System Analyst
39 Years

William M. Gibbs, Jr.
Transportation Maintenance Technician
25 Years

Donna M. Ogerly
Maintenance Support Technician
23 Years

James R. Odom
Maintenance Security Supervisor
21 Years

Odessa District
Lily G. Talamantez
General Engineering Technician
38 Years

Tyler District
Billy C. Bennett
Program Administrator
42 Years

Wichita Falls District
Lewis D. Faver, Jr.
Maintenance Technician
28 Years

Motor Vehicle Division
Abie Parker
System Support Specialist
8 Years

August 2002
Abilene District
Sharon P. Weaver
Accountant
29 Years

Amarillo District
Danny J. Whitney
Special Jobs Supervisor
36 Years

Peggy Vinson
Accountant
30 Years

James P. Morrison
Transportation Maintenance Specialist
28 Years

Louis D. Ruthardt
Transportation Maintenance Technician
18 Years

Baltasar Perales, Jr.
Engineering Technician
16 Years

Atlanta District
R. L. Nero
Transportation Maintenance Technician
28 Years

Austin District
Marvin W. Stahl, Jr.
Engineering Technician
37 Years

Jay C. Meyer
Engineering Technician
34 Years

Andrew Bozek
Engineering Technician
16 Years

Nancy L. Barton
Staff Services Officer
10 Years

Donald T. Barton
Right Of Way Agent
8 Years

Eddie Owens
Engineering Aide
6 Years

Brownwood District
Clyde E. Braddock
Program Administrator
33 Years

Jimmy W. Davis
Transportation Maintenance Specialist
32 Years

Wayne R. Hurford
Engineering Technician
25 Years

Bryan District
Barbara K. Jones
Human Resource Specialist
35 Years

Juan B. Pineda
Engineering Technician
28 Years

Jerrold E. Hensley
Engineering Technician
20 Years

Corpus Christi District
Patrick U. Norrell
Director
39 Years

Charon B. Jones
Administrative Technician
23 Years

Lorna Z. Morgenroth
Administrative Technician
17 Years

Dallas District
Connie M. Jones
Program Administrator
28 Years

El Paso District
Gilberto Mendoza
Maintenance Supervisor
38 Years

Jose H. Pina
Engineering Technician
35 Years

Roberto M. Tejada
Director
35 Years

Robert L. Steeds
Engineer
28 Years

Fort Worth District
Carl Logan
Right of Way Supervisor
39 Years

William E. Glenn
Maintenance Technician
33 Years

Karl Klose
Engineering Specialist
32 Years

Ella I. Oliver
Purchaser Specialist
24 Years

Houston District
James E. Grayson, PE.
Design Engineer
57 Years

Lonnie B. Johnson, Sr.
Program Administrator
36 Years

Mills D. Wood
Engineering Technician
30 Years

William D. Gates
Contract Technician
28 Years

Billy Beichner
Engineering Technician
22 Years

Chock M. Tam
Engineering Specialist
16 Years

Laredo District
Jose G. Antu
Engineering Technician
41 Years

Fernando S. Gonzales
Maintenance Supervisor
37 Years

Isabel De La Rosa
Asst. Maintenance Section Supervisor
34 Years

Guillermo Cuellar
Maintenance Engineer Technician
30 Years

Rafael V. Cervantes
Engineering Technician
24 Years

Lubbock District
Carl R. Utley
Director
37 Years

Telesforo (Tommy) Guzman
Maintenance Section Supervisor
33 Years

Donnie L. Howard
Survey Specialist
30 Years

Edward L. McCutcheon
Transportation Maintenance Technician
13 Years

Kenneth D. Estes
Transportation Maintenance Technician
19 Years

Lufkin District
Gary J. Cowart
Transportation Maintenance Technician
30 Years

Edward F. Few
Building Maintenance Mechanic
19 Years

Odessa District
Jack W. Evans
Transportation Maintenance Crew Chief
22 Years

Margie W. Neitzel
Engineering Technician
22 Years

Paris District
Earnest J. Yates
Machinist
25 Years

San Angelo District
C. Wayne Smith
Engineering Specialist
36 Years

Charles J. Wearden
Maintenance Supervisor
32 Years

Raymond J. Beckhusen
Engineering Technician
31 Years

Charles M. Thompson
Motor Vehicle Technician
25 Years

Candelario M. Landin
Engineering Aide
15 Years

San Antonio District
Calvin F. Rathke
Engineering Specialist
33 Years

John R. Suehs
Engineering Technician
33 Years

■ See EXIT RAMP, Page 15



Service Awards

Abilene District
15 years
Glover L. Miller III

Amarillo District
25 years
Frank Montoya
15 years
Macon W. Paschall III
10 years
Vic W. Lincoln
Edwardo Olivarez

Atlanta District
25 years
Oliver W. Sparks
5 years
Dwayne K. Johnson
Gary D. Messer

Austin District
25 years
James E. Wilhelm
20 years
Paul D. Meinke
15 years
Terry G. McCoy
10 years
Shawn A. Campbell

Beaumont District
25 years
Oliver L. Crumedy
20 years
Lawrence R. Dirden

Brownwood District
25 years
Jimmy D. Field
15 years
Gary D. Underwood
10 years
Merlin T. Harrington

Bryan District
5 years
Ray P. Williams

Childress District
10 years
George A. Cother
Ricky M. Diggs
Maximillian Gerhardt
Delbert R. Glover
Rhonda G. Thane

Corpus Christi District
25 years
Joann S. Mireles
Jorge A. Salinas
20 years
Braulio C. Carvajal, Jr.
10 years
Joel F. Longoria
5 years
Vernon O. Kuykendall

Dallas District
30 years
Mary M. Bush
Jay R. Nelson
25 years
Terry L. Franks
20 years
Gary L. Stegall
10 years
Christopher P. Briggs
Rudy Medellin
5 years
Willie D. Lee
Erik K. Walsh
Sandra R. Williams

El Paso District
35 years
Andres J. Pacheco
20 years
Hector R. Granado
Joseph W. Hudy
Johnny C. Vasquez
15 years
Mary M. Brown

Fort Worth District
25 years
Ray E. Caudle
20 years
Perry G. Burnett
15 years
Robert P. Glidewell
10 years
Alex G. Bell
Jock A. Jones
John M. Rooney
Charles C. Rose
5 years
James H. Colwell, Jr.
Wilson F. Kendrick
Christopher E. Medley
Rick J. Worthington

Houston District
40 years
John A. Bench
25 years
Howard W. Chopp
20 years
Michael J. Christley
Willie Goff
Clyde D. Goodson
Michael J. Montalbano, Jr.
Scott E. Scholz
Charles L. Simmons
Lynn E. Whittington
15 years
William R. Brudnick
Marc Allen Coppock
David E. Fink
Michael Hobbs
Charles A. Neuman
Lucio F. Ortiz
10 years
Viera A. Spakovsky
Leslie W. Thompson
Alan J. Wang

Laredo District
25 years
Eduardo Garcia

Lubbock District
20 years
Daniel D. Putman
Hector Serna, Jr.
10 years
Stanley B. Aldrich, Jr.
Carl Smiley

Odessa District
30 years
Adan R. Luna
15 years
Gonzalo Guzman, Jr.
Juan M. Urias
10 years
Lennerd Byrd
Joel S. Griner
Javier Lozano

Paris District
30 years
Jerry D. Palmer
15 years
Eva N. Flenniken
10 years
Robert E. Cox
Billy M. Meador

Pharr District
25 years
Alfredo Robledo
15 years
Alfredo Abrego
Reynaldo Avila
Emilio V. Duenez
Mario Guerra
Stephen P. Walker

San Angelo District
25 years
Armando S. Dominguez
10 years
Chris A. Gorbett
5 years
Norma K. Butt

San Antonio District
30 years
Carlos R. Vinton
25 years
Jeffery L. Howard
20 years
Glenn P. Grisham
Schelly S. Radcliff
15 years
Glen R. Biermann
Abelardo S. Casas
Claude L. Cosgrove
Louis Heimann III
5 years
Jack E. Dugas
Keith H. Hutzler

Tyler District
25 years
Jesse Crowder, Jr.
20 years
Arnold Gonzales
Eugene M. Oates
15 years
Terry D. Williams

Waco District
40 years
Edward R. Zettler
25 years
Ronald R. Houston
15 years
John F. Obr
10 years
Ervin L. Middlebrook, Jr.
Donna G. Mills
Bennie Neal, Jr.

Wichita Falls District
20 years
Haskell P. Roberts, Jr.
15 years
Jimmy F. Bruton
Wallace S. Slaggle
10 years
Jerry L. Fairchild
Eliazar G. Salinas
5 years
Lisa E. Horton
Steven L. Sluder

Yoakum District
30 years
Frank F. Cisneros
Ronald J. Roecker
15 years
Wilbert E. Wendt, Jr.

Administration
10 years
Mary A. Griss

Construction Division
25 years
Bruno C. Voigt

General Services Division
30 years
Douglas M. Peeples
15 years
James D. Markle

Human Resources Division
10 years
Benjamin C. Abattam
Cheryl A. Caldwell
Thomas T. Dellinger
Deborah A. Parkansky
Paul E. Summerbell

Information Systems
Division
15 years
Amber M. Allardyce
Karen D. Garcia
William L. Gasper
Brian R. Wetzig
10 years
Lih Jen Lan

Motor Vehicle Division
15 years
Brett G. Bray
Janice M. Maynard
Ronald D. Medlock
Jon T. Ries
Leon D. Wegele
Lloyd M. Wolf

Occupational Safety
Division
5 years
Lola S. Byrne

Public Transportation
Division
10 years
Mary N. Bennett

Traffic Operations Division
15 years
Jacob K. Moore

Transportation Planning
and Programming Division
30 years
Deborah A. Hansen
20 years
Stanley W. Labauve
15 years
Victor G. Hernandez
10 years
George W. Petrek III

Travel Division
25 years
Virginia O. Garcia

Vehicle Titles and
Registration Division
25 years
Joyce B. Lancaster
15 years
Stanley J. Wegner

Subscription Notice

State statute requires that those people (TxDOT retirees and others) who receive Transportation News **BY MAIL** must make a request to remain on the mailing list. Address your request for annual renewal to **TxDOT Public Information Office, Attn: TNEWS Mailing List, 125 E. 11th St., Austin, TX 78701**. This notice does not apply to TxDOT employees as they receive individual copies through departmental distribution.

IN MEMORIAM

Abilene District
Francis W. Landon
Maintenance Technician
retired 1981
died June 16, 2002

Bryan District
Charles K. Allen
Maintenance Technician
retired 1991
died May 21, 2002

William H. Henderson
Maintenance Technician
retired 1994
died June 2, 2002

Childress District
Howard L. Preston
Right Of Way Appraiser
retired 1984
died May 21, 2002

Corpus Christi District
Patrick E. Byrne
Engineer
retired 1982
died June 5, 2002

Lloyd E. Rathke
Maintenance Technician
retired 1982
died June 6, 2002

Dallas District
C. L. Cook
Maintenance Technician
retired 1987
died April 23, 2002

Tommie F. Gay
Engineering Technician
retired 1977
died May 23, 2002

Kenneth W. McPherson
Engineering Technician
retired 1992
died May 26, 2002

George W. Pechacek
Maintenance Technician
retired 1993
died June 6, 2002

El Paso District
Macario Marquez
Maintenance Technician
retired 1993
died March 24, 2002

Fort Worth District
Don E. Lee
Maintenance Construction
Supervisor
retired 1991
died June 9, 2002

Houston District
Jack D. Allbritton
Maintenance Technician
retired 1996
died June 24, 2002

Darrell G. Gloyna
Engineering Technician
died August 10, 2002

Sylvester Poncik
Maintenance Construction
Supervisor
retired 1981
died June 14, 2002

Lubbock District
J. W. Henson
Maintenance Technician
retired 1982
died May 23, 2002

Lufkin District
Robert H. Reid, Jr.
Assistant Maintenance
Section Supervisor
retired 1984
died July 7, 2002

Odessa District
Paul H. Coleman
District Engineer
retired 1976
died May 25, 2002

Price H. Pool
Engineering Technician
retired 1993
died May 22, 2002

Paris District
Bill R. Armstrong
Engineering Technician
retired 1986
died August 5, 2002

James R. Beckham
Maintenance Construction
Supervisor
retired 1986
died June 14, 2002

Everett G. Hinson
Engineering Specialist
retired 1993
died May 30, 2002

Pharr District
Raymond W. Milam
Shop Supervisor
retired 1992
died June 4, 2002

Waco District
Chester L. Giddens
Engineering Technician
retired 1976
died June 12, 2002

James F. Watson
Maintenance Technician
retired 1978
died June 12, 2002

Wichita Falls District
Harvey E. Pinkman
Maintenance Technician
retired 1987
died May 17, 2002

Yoakum District
Carl V. Ramert
District Engineer
retired 1987
died August 13, 2002

Connie L. Richter
Maintenance Technician
retired 1981
died June 26, 2002

Bridge Division
Ok M. Leguen
Engineer Technician
died August 10, 2002

General Services Division
Robert C. Johns
Engineering Specialist
retired 1996
died June 15, 2002

Finance Division
Annie R. Henry
Accountant
retired 1998
died May 17, 2002

Traffic Operations Division
Samuel E. Garrett
Landscape Architect
retired 1980
died February 7, 2002

Transportation Planning
and Programming Division
Marcellus A. Dragoo
Planning Assistant
retired 1986
died May 20, 2002

Vehicle Titles and
Registration Division
Addie L. Raney
Clerical Supervisor
retired 1975
died May 24, 2002

Retirees

EXIT RAMP

Continued from Page 13
Tyler District
Perry L. Spence
Engineering Specialist
38 Years

Waco District
Rhuben K. Weeks
Engineering Technician
32 Years

Wichita Falls District
Buddie F. Rivers
Director
39 Years

Rita H. Lingnau
Administrative Technician
35 Years

Clifford L. Bartram
Engineering Specialist
34 Years

Clyde E. Williford
Engineering Specialist
33 Years

Yoakum District
William S. Schramek
Engineering Specialist
35 Years

Jannette P. Hans
Administrative Technician
30 Years

Gordon M. Whittier
Engineering Technician
18 Years

Administration
Sallie S. Burk
Program Specialist
34 Years

Aviation Division
Susan Page
Information Specialist
13 Years

Civil Rights Office
Jana K. Nava
Director
8 Years

Construction Division
Tanya Pavliska Goode
Program Administrator
29 Years

Environmental Affairs
Division
Wayne C. Young
Program Specialist
19 Years

Information Systems
Division
John Paul Crouch
System Analyst
24 Years

Justin Castillo
System Analyst
23 Years

Maintenance Division
Carol S. Whittenbaugh
Program Specialist
35 Years

Betty S. Farnham
Manager
31 Years

Vehicle Titles and
Registration Division
Sue Ermis
Information Specialist
33 Years

Barbara A. Stolle
VTR Customer Service
Coordinator
33 Years

Darrel R. Hunt
Director
31 Years

Anita K. Walden
Program Specialist
30 Years

backtracks



OK, this isn't a mystery photo. On the other hand, if you don't recognize the large building on the right side of this photograph, you might want to take the new employee orientation a second time. Shot from the observation deck of the Capitol, this snapshot was dated July 1946. Transportation News Editor Mike Cox found the 56-year-old picture at an antiques store in Hillsboro last month. He paid all of 25 cents for it.

Two readers recognized last month's photo. Congratulations to Kent Steger, and David Blume for identifying last month's Backtracks photo as the structure on SH-12 over Sabine River in Deweyville, TX. Kent and David are employees in the Bridge Division.

Calendar



2002

SEPTEMBER

- 16-18 Environmental Coordinators Conference, Austin, ENV
- 18-19 Buckle Up Texas summit, Austin, TRF
- 18-20 PIO/MLO Conference, San Angelo, PIO
- 20 Managing the Government Supply Chain, Austin, GSD
- 26 Commission Meeting, Austin

OCTOBER

- 8-9 District Equipment Administrators and District Purchasing and Materials Administrators Meeting, Austin, GSD
- 9-10 Bid Letting, Austin, CST
- 21-23 Transportation Short Course, College Station
- 24-25 Customer Service - Key to Success in Procurement, Austin, GSD
- 28-30 Texas Vegetation Management Assoc. Conf., Galveston, MNT
- 30-11/1 Truck Rodeo & Accident Prevention Mtg, College Station, OCC
- 31 Commission Meeting, Austin

NOVEMBER

- 1 Truck Rodeo & Accident Prevention Mtg, College Station, OCC
- 4-7 Research Management Committee Meeting, San Antonio, RTI
- 7-8 Bid Letting, Austin, CST

The complete TxDOT Calendar is on the intranet at <http://crossroads/org/pio/articles/calendar.htm>



Texas Department of Transportation



125 E. 11th
Austin, Texas 78701

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED